National Transportation Safety Board PRELIMINARY REPORT AVIATION

NTSB ID: WPR15GA005 Most Critical Injury: Fatal

Occurrence Date: 10/07/2014 Investigated By: NTSB

Minor

AVIATION			Occurrence Type: Accident							
Location/Time										
Nearest City/Place	State	Zip Code	Local Time	Time Zone						
El Portal CA			95318	1630	PDT					
Aircraft Information										
Registration Number	Aircraft Manu	facturer			Model/Series N	Model/Series Number				
N449DF	MARSH AV	/IATION			S 2F3AT/NO	S 2F3AT/NO SERIES				
Type of Aircraft: Airplane	Amateur Buil	t Aircraft? No								

Revenue Sightseeing Flight: No Air Medical Transport Flight: No

1

Narrative

Injury Summary:

Brief narrative statement of facts, conditions and circumstances pertinent to the accident/incident:

Fatal

*** Note: : NTSB investigators either traveled in support of this investigation or conducted a significant amount of investigative work without any travel, and used data obtained from various sources to prepare this public aircraft accident report. ***

Serious

On October 7, 2014, about 1630 Pacific daylight time, a Marsh Aviation S-2F3AT airplane, N449DF, call sign tanker 81, was destroyed by impact with terrain and a postcrash fire while maneuvering in the Yosemite National Park, near El Portal, California. The airplane was registered to and operated by Cal Fire under contract to the National Parks Service, as a visual flight rules (VFR), public use aerial firefighting tanker. The airline transport pilot, the sole occupant, received fatal injuries. Visual meteorological conditions prevailed for the flight that departed Columbia Airport (O22), Columbia, California.

According to a Forest Service spokesman, the airplane was stationed at the airbase at Hollister, California, and had been dispatched to the Dog Rock fire. The airplane arrived on scene, and made one drop on the fire, then proceeded to the Columbia Airport to be reloaded with fire retardant.

During the aerial firefighting operations, in addition to the aerial tanker, 2 other aircraft were used; an orbiting aerial controller that coordinated aerial operations with ground units; and a "lead plane" that tracked ahead of the tanker to define the route and the drop initiation point.

Upon returning to the fire scene, the accident airplane had coordinated its next drop with the orbiting aerial coordinator, and was following the lead airplane. The crew of the lead airplane did not see the accident. The crew of the controller airplane reported that the accident airplane may have struck a tree with its wing, which separated from the airplane. Both aircrews reported that there was smoke in the area, but visibility was good.

On October 9, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigator-in-charge and an additional NTSB investigator arrived on scene. Also on scene were representatives (investigators) of the U.S.D.A Office of Aviation Safety (OAS), National Parks Service (NPS), U.S Forest Service (USFS), and CAL FIRE.

Updated on Oct 14 2014 7:39PM

TRANSO
National Transportation Safety Board
PRELIMINARY REPORT
ÁVIATION

NTSB ID: WPR15GA005

PRELIMINARY REPORT AVIATION		Occurrence Date: 10/07/2014										
		Occurrence Type: Accident					1					
Other A	ircraft Involved											
	on Number	Aircraft Manufacturer					Model/Series Number					
Accident Information												
Aircraft D	amage: Destroyed			Acci	dent C	Occurred Durin	ng:					
Crew	N	ame				Certificate No.				Injury		
Pilot	On File				Or	n File	File Fa					
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
Operato	or Information											
Name Operator D USDA FOREST SERVICE FEPP						nator Code Doing Business As						
Street Address City MC						ELLAN	•	State Zip Code CA 956524001				
-Type of Certificate(s) Held: None												
Air Carrier Operating Certificate(s):												
Operating Certificate:					0	perator Certif	icate:					
Regulation Flight Conducted Under: Public Use												
Type of F	light Operations Conduc	ted: Public Aircraft	- Federa	ıl								
Flight P	Plan/Itinerary											
Type of Flight Plan Filed: Company VFR												
Last Departure Point						State	Airport	Identifier				
Columbia						CA						
Destination						State	Airport	Identifier				
Same as Accident/Incident Location												
Weathe	r Information											
Investigator's Source:						lity ID:		Observation Time (Local):				
Sky/Lowe	Sky/Lowest Cloud Condition:					Ft. A	AGL					
Lowest Ceiling: Ft. AGL						isibility:	10	SM	Altim	neter:	"Hg	
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National Transportation Safety Board PRELIMINARY REPORT

NTSB ID: WPR15GA005

PRELIMINARY REPORT		Occurrence Date: 10/07/2014								
AVIATION			Occurrence Type: Accident							
Weather Information (Continued from page 2)										
Temperature: °C	De	ew Point:	°C	Wind D	irection:					
Wind Speed: Kts	; <u> </u>	Gusts: Kt	s.	Weathe	er Conditions at Accide	nt Site: \	/isual C	Conditions		
Administration Data										
Notification From						Date)			
California Division of Forestr										
FAA District Office/Coordinator					Investigator-In-Charg	je (IIC)				
					Lawrence Lewis					